

ANNEX

SECTION 74-THE FACTORIES (BENZENE) REGULATIONS

Regulations by the Minister. Statutory Instrument 179 of 1978

158 of 1993

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Factories (Benzene) Regulations, and shall apply to all factories where benzene or products containing benzene are manufactured, handled or used. ***Title and application***

2. In these Regulations, unless the context otherwise requires- ***Interpretation***

"benzene" means the aromatic hydrocarbon benzene C₆H₆;

"products containing benzene" means products the benzene content of which exceeds one per cent by volume.

3. Whenever harmless or less harmful substitute products are available, such products shall be used instead of benzene or products containing benzene.

Restriction on use of benzene

4. The provisions of regulation 3 shall not apply to- (a) the production of benzene; (b) the use of benzene for chemical synthesis; (c) the use of benzene in motor fuel; or (d) analytical or research work carried out in laboratories. ***Exceptions***

5. In any factory where persons are exposed to benzene or products containing benzene, the concentration of benzene in the air in such factory shall not exceed twenty-five parts per million (80 mg/m³). ***Restriction on concentration of benzene in air***

6. All necessary measures shall be taken to prevent the escape of benzene vapour into the air in work rooms where benzene or products containing benzene are manufactured, handled or used. ***Prevention of escape of vapour***

7. (1) Work processes involving the use of benzene or products containing benzene shall be carried out in an enclosed system. Work to be carried out in enclosed area

(2) Where it is not practicable for the work processes to be carried out in an enclosed system as stated in sub-regulation (1), efficient means shall be provided to ensure the removal of benzene vapour. *(As amended by S.I. No. 158 of 1993)*

8. Any person who may have skin contact with benzene or products containing benzene shall be provided with adequate means of personal protection against the risks of absorbing benzene through the skin. ***Protection against skin contact***

9. Any person who for special reasons may be exposed to concentration of benzene in the air which exceeds the maximum referred to in regulation 5 shall be provided

with adequate means of personal protection against the risks of inhaling benzene vapour. ***Protection against benzene vapour***

10. Every person exposed to benzene or products containing benzene shall be provided with suitable protective clothing which, together with the means of protection referred to in regulations 8 and 9, shall be cleaned and maintained by the employer. ***Protective clothing***

11. Every person supplied with means of personal protection or protective clothing shall use them at all times during working hours. ***Use of protective clothing***

12. No food shall be taken into or consumed in work rooms in which benzene or products containing benzene are manufactured, handled or used. ***Prohibition of consumption of meals in work rooms***

13. All factories where benzene or products containing benzene are manufactured, handled or used shall be equipped with- (a) sufficient and suitable washing facilities; (b) suitable accommodation for taking meals, unless appropriate arrangements exist for meals to be taken elsewhere; and (c) change rooms where work clothes can be stored separately from the ordinary clothes. ***Washing and eating facilities***

14. (1) Every person employed in processes involving exposure to benzene or products containing benzene shall undergo- (a) a pre-employment medical examination for fitness which shall include a blood test; and (b) periodical re-examination at intervals not exceeding twelve months which shall include biological and blood tests. ***Medical examinations***

(2) The medical examinations referred to in sub-regulation (1) shall be carried out during working hours under the supervision of a qualified physician.

(3) Such medical examinations shall not involve the employed person in any expense.

15. Any woman medically certified as pregnant and any nursing mother shall not be employed in work processes involving exposure to benzene or products containing benzene. ***Employment of pregnant and nursing mothers***

16. Young persons under the age of eighteen years shall not be employed in work processes involving exposure to benzene or products containing benzene except where they are undergoing education or training and are under adequate technical and medical supervision. ***Employment of persons under age***

17. Benzene or products containing benzene shall only be brought into work rooms in containers which are of suitable material and of adequate strength and so designed and constructed as to prevent any leakage or escape of vapours. ***Benzene containers***

18. The word "Benzene" shall be clearly labelled and be visible on any container holding benzene or products containing benzene. ***Labelling of containers***

19. Persons employed in factories where benzene or products containing benzene are manufactured, handled or used shall receive appropriate training and instructions on measures to safeguard health and prevent accidents as well as taking necessary action in case of benzene poisoning. ***Training of employees***

20. In factories where benzene or products containing benzene are manufactured, handled or used, notices shall be displayed in prominent positions indicating- (a) the hazards which are likely to happen; (b) preventive measures to be taken; (c) protective equipment to be used; and (d) first-aid measures to be taken in case of benzene poisoning. ***Display of notices***

21. Any person who contravenes any of the provisions of these Regulations shall be guilty of an offence and be liable on conviction to the penalties prescribed in section ninety-two of the Factories Act. ***Offences and penalties***